

AUTOMOTIVE

## Land Rover salutes Red Cross in poignant documentary series

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*The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and Land Rover release the first of a series of short films. Image credit: Land Rover*

By KATIE TAMOLA

British automaker Land Rover is showcasing the life-changing work of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) during the COVID-19 pandemic in a documentary series.

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In the first 25-minute short film, viewers are invited into the world of the Red Cross team, which uses Land Rover vehicles to travel across Rome to bring food, blankets and additional resources to those living in homelessness. Although the Land Rover brand is present within the series, the short film mainly serves as a showcase of humanity and compassion.

"This campaign gives an unfiltered look at Land Rover's humanitarian efforts with the Red Cross and allows viewers to see the direct impact their charitable efforts have on Italy's vulnerable homeless population," said Julie Blackley, communications manager at [iSeeCars](#), Boston. "It humanizes the homeless population by telling their stories and reminds the population of the valuable work the Red Cross does beyond natural disasters."

"Social responsibility has always been important for brands, but in recent years we've seen it be more prevalent in company marketing efforts," she said. "Emotion drives consumer behavior, and people will want to purchase from brands that align with their moral beliefs."

You were like angels

The short film follows Italian Red Cross volunteers traveling through the streets of Italy as they offer assistance to those displaced. It is the first installment of Land Rover's humanitarians in action series.

The Italian Red Cross offers a wide range of services including hot meal delivery, blanket and clothing distribution, veterinarian services and more. The true core of the video is the human connection that the Red Cross team shares with each person they encounter.

*The Italian Red Cross uses a Land Rover to travel throughout Rome, offering resources and comfort to those living in homelessness*

Viewers watch as the volunteer team travels to bring those living in homelessness food and blankets on Christmas night. The team works with Mario, a man they have met before, cleaning wounds on his head and feet.

While driving back in the team's Land Rover, volunteers reflect on how this Christmas is different for them due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but how for the homeless population every Christmas is different and presents unique challenges.

The video touches on the fact that homelessness is a rising issue in Italy, and that due to the pandemic, a lot of the shelters have limited space, leaving people with nowhere to go. At this time, volunteers in Rome were using Land Rover vehicles to help distribute about 100 hot meals per shift, as well as blankets, medical care and mental health support.

"The more I'm in it, the more I am with the teams, the more I take part in the service, and meet people on the street, we bring hope that things might get better for someone," Giorgio Vacirca, a volunteer, says in the video.

The video then follows the volunteers' visit to the Covid Bridge Hostel, a safe facility for the homeless to get tested and self-quarantine. The Italian Red Cross partnered with the diocesan Caritas in setting up this hostel to help stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

A woman working at the hostel illustrates the mission of the Italian Red Cross when she says, "It's great to see how we can work together when we have the same goal, everyone takes care of a different aspect and we work well, as we all go in the same direction."

The team then brings a veterinarian to examine some dogs who live with their owners in homelessness. Mr. Vacirca talks about the hope that these animals give people to keep on going.



*Red Cross volunteers reflect on what they've learned through their work with the homeless population in Italy during the COVID-19 pandemic.*  
*Image credit: Land Rover*

"At Land Rover we believe it is vital to put purpose-led initiatives at the heart of our business and are incredibly proud of our partnership with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent societies (IFRC), having worked together for over 66 years," said Rachel Field, global brand & partnerships PR manager at Jaguar Land Rover. "Since then, through our vehicles, funding, and expertise, we have helped the Red Cross to reach more than a million people in vulnerable communities."

During the time the video was filmed, bars and restaurants were closed and there was a curfew of 10 p.m., ultimately leaving the homeless at a greater risk for starvation. The shot then cuts to the team once again distributing food and thermal blankets to protect peoples' belongings for when it rains.

"Thank you for all you do, especially during lockdown, because when everything was closed you were like angels and you helped," A man says to the team.

Since roughly 150 women had been living in homelessness in Rome during the winter, making them vulnerable to sexual assault, the Red Cross drove to various areas to give women resources and information about female refugee support services.

At the end of the video, one of the volunteers talks about how he sees a "need to break the loneliness" in his work. It is a testament to what the Italian Red Cross does throughout the video: reminding people that they are not alone.

The film is dedicated to Mario, a man the volunteers had worked with, and all others who have passed away while living in homelessness.

## Land Rover and the Red Cross

The British automaker and the Red Cross have a longstanding relationship, with Land Rover constantly innovating and developing its offerings to aid in the organization's assistance efforts.

Land Rover has worked with the Red Cross since 1954 to assist with disaster recovery in 25 countries. The Discovery Emergency Response was developed by Special Vehicle Operations to better support rescue and recovery efforts in remote areas ([see story](#)).

In 2017, Land Rover demonstrated the life-saving capabilities of drones with a bespoke model designed specifically for disaster relief. Unveiled at the Geneva Motor Show March 7, Jaguar Land Rover Special Vehicle Operations (SVO) showed off its bespoke Land Rover Discovery for use by the Austrian Red Cross.

Dubbed "Project Hero," the Discovery model is an advanced communication vehicle that was designed to undertake life-saving missions ([see story](#)).

The first installation of Land Rover's Humanitarians in Action series may feature the vehicles, but the brand seemingly aims a more prominent spotlight on the meaningful work of the Red Cross.

"Land Rover has loaned out hundreds of vehicles to assist with emergency response efforts in the past year, but the brand makes no mention of their charitable efforts in the campaign and instead focuses on the work of the Red Cross," Ms. Blackley said. "It's an effective campaign because homelessness is a global emergency, and it reminds us that while many of us struggled with spending so much time at home during the lockdown, there is a significant portion of the population that didn't have a home to shelter in."

"Land Rover is associated with luxury and utility, but this raises awareness of its humanitarian efforts and showcases the capabilities of its vehicles to aid in disaster response," she said.

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